

120-Day Report Discussion

Subsequent Recommendations and Strategies

In its 45-Day Report to the Governor, the Rebuild Iowa Advisory Commission proposed ten recommendations for long term efforts to rebuild Iowa. The Task Forces discussed these recommendations and largely endorsed their validity and intent. As a starting point, it is suggested that the ten Subsequent Recommendations and their associated strategies be retained as part of the recommendations and strategies for long term recovery.

With this in mind, the Task Forces identified additional points from their discussions of the subsequent recommendations and included three additional sets of comments.

This document shows the strategies from the 45-Day Report in turquoise.

The additional strategies proposed by the Unified Task Force Report are shown in orange.

Subsequent Recommendations

1. Continue to provide advice and support to individuals seeking assistance in making their way through the challenges of rebuilding their lives in a “case management” framework while creating a lasting organizational capacity and process over time.
 - Continue to strengthen local case management services.
 - Determine the long term sustainability of and funding mechanisms for disaster case management capacity and systems.
 - Determine the responsible coordinating entity during non-disaster times.
 - Continue to provide case management services, expanding and transitioning to the types of services required by residents as they experience a prolonged recovery period.
 - Develop and conduct a comprehensive evaluation of case management services provided throughout the disasters of 2008 and recovery period. Use those findings to adjust and enhance the system in use.
 - Convene stakeholders in the many services and supports provided by case management to provide input and assistance to the RIO in its planning for a system and infrastructure to maintain and improve case management through disaster and non-disaster times.
 - Identify options for ensuring continuity of training and procedures for case management, allowing for adequate trained staff and/or volunteers prepared for immediate activation of the system.

- Review and adjust, if necessary, the trigger for activating the case management system in light of the experiences of 2008 and the program evaluation findings.
 - Engage 211 and the Iowa Concern Hotline as integral features of the case management system. Formalize agreements with these entities as needed.
 - Consider establishing human needs infrastructure in a system to supplement public health and health care capacity through activating students in health and human services education programs, including establishing disaster provisions for legal and regulatory flexibility related to scope of practice.
2. Ensure availability of adequate, affordable housing and the ability of individuals and families to rent or purchase those homes.
- Provide funding to motivate private and nonprofit market production at prices and standards of quality that meet long term energy-efficiency and sustainability goals. This production would then be available to local communities.
 - Support long term recovery groups' identification of repair and production needs and efforts.
 - Provide gap funding for production of affordable multi-family units.
 - Provide modest assistance to stabilize family finances after the disruption of the disasters.
 - Provide resources to families displaced by the disaster to enable them to repair or replace their homes. These resources may differ based on funding sources identified, extent of damage or displacement, and opportunities to provide immediate assistance.
 - Support local housing trust funds.
 - Incorporate elements of energy efficiency, sustainable/green building, and smart growth in housing repair, redevelopment, and development. Promote energy efficiency rebates and other incentive programs.
 - Incent developers of new housing, homeowners, landlords, and others working with them to incorporate elements of universal design into the dwelling. Incorporate elements of livability and walkability when feasible for areas of new and rebuilt housing.
 - Track and monitor development and return of housing stock to affected areas. Provide regular updates on the housing status, including analysis of the types of housing, location relative to hazard risk areas (including floodplains), affordability, and other data relevant to decision making and priorities for housing production.

- Review state and local policies that may expedite action in times of Presidential Disaster Declaration. Undertake efforts to create waivers, exceptions, or special conditions to benefit the response and recovery efforts for the next disaster.
3. Provide incentives for Iowa's struggling small business, microenterprises, and non-profits for restoration and rebuilding of their businesses.
- The state should create and support job and skills training and re-training vital to the economic growth of the state as well as for businesses and Iowa's residents. As the state develops and recruits new industry, ensuring the availability of trained workers is essential. Workers affected by the disaster will benefit with quality jobs.
 - Seek additional funds through federal appropriations designated for disaster economic transition training and re-training initiatives.
 - At the state level, develop a set of state contingency initiatives to provide support and assistance to small business, microenterprises, and non-profits that would be activated in affected areas upon receiving a Presidential Disaster Declaration and an order for activation from the Governor. Any policy and rule exceptions, waivers, and adjustments should be evaluated and established during non-disaster times so the assistance programs are ready to launch when activated.
 - At the state level, work with county and city leaders to develop a set of local contingency options to provide support and assistance to small business, microenterprises, and non-profits that would be activated in affected areas upon receiving a Presidential Disaster Declaration and an order for activation from the Governor. Any state or local policy and rule exceptions, waivers, and adjustments should be evaluated and established during non-disaster times so the assistance programs are ready to launch when activated. These options would be consistent from local jurisdiction to local jurisdiction.
 - Develop a handbook outlining the initiatives identified and eligible for activation according to established policy.
 - Adjust the caps and rules for state historic preservation grants during times of disaster to provide greater access by organizations in affected areas.
 - Provide assignable tax credits for developers of infrastructure and commercial properties.
 - Develop initiatives that integrate green building, smart growth measures, and energy efficiencies into the mainstream practices of rebuilding and in future construction.
 - Develop and implement contingency initiatives for water and conservation practices, including a cover crop program, to be activated in affected areas when a Presidential Disaster Declaration is granted and the Governor issues an activation order.

4. Complete floodplain mapping for the entire state as begun under immediate action items.

The state should fund the remaining components to complete the floodplain mapping process, including the aerial photography and delineation of the floodplain boundaries for Iowa rivers and streams within three years.

- Use of the floodplain data should be promoted and made available to the public over the Internet.
 - Hydrologic modeling using these new data should be developed and funded as a tool for floodplain management and for state and local decision making.
 - The state should assess, update, and install the necessary gauges in the rivers to better track and respond to real-time river levels.
 - The state should continue its expedited planning for completion of floodplain mapping.
 - Seek and leverage non-state funds for as much of the floodplain mapping process as possible.
 - Pursue and implement the mapping process and related activities as expeditiously as is reasonable and practical.
 - Develop a public education initiative around issues of floodplain mapping, what it means to individuals, flood insurance, and guidance on making wise choices.
 - Work with organizations to develop and offer training for public officials on floodplain mapping and application of the data.
 - Work with local communities and provide current information to assist them in making wise choices about participating in the National Flood Insurance Program.
 - Develop a statewide policy on smart development, including policy related to development within a floodplain.
5. Identify, create, and sustain funding options and provide flexibility for local and state governments to assist Iowa in rebuilding an even better Iowa.
- Create a statewide disaster contingency fund available to cities, counties, and public educational institutions as a gap funding source for future disasters, i.e., an Evergreen Fund.
 - Allow local bond referendum vote percentages for passage to be 50% plus 1 for affected areas in a declared Presidential Disaster Area.
 - At the state level, develop a set of state contingency initiatives to provide flexibility for local and state governments that would be activated in affected areas upon receiving a Presidential Disaster Declaration and an order for activation from the Governor. Any

policy and rule exceptions, waivers, and adjustments should be evaluated and established during non-disaster times so the assistance programs are ready to launch when activated. A number of suggested elements are found in the previous section of this report and in the RIAC's 45-Day Report.

- At the state level, work with county and city leaders to develop a set of local contingency options to provide flexibility for local governments that would be activated in affected areas upon receiving a Presidential Disaster Declaration and an order for activation from the Governor. Any state or local policy and rule exceptions, waivers, and adjustments should be evaluated and established during non-disaster times so the assistance programs are ready to launch when activated. These options would be consistent from local jurisdiction to local jurisdiction. A number of suggested elements are found in the previous section of this report and in the RIAC's 45-Day Report.
6. Invest in local emergency management agencies for the central coordination function and work in all areas of emergency management – preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation.
- The state should support and assist local emergency management agencies in expanding their capacity to perform the full scope of local emergency management responsibilities.
 - The state should seek resources to adequately fund and support work and activities of the local emergency management agencies.
 - Work with the Iowa Emergency Management Association and/or other stakeholders to compile a summary of the required and expected responsibilities of the Emergency Management Coordinator position to include but not be limited to statutory requirements, and compile information that demonstrates the capacity level of each county to fulfill these requirements.
 - Work with the Iowa Emergency Management Association to evaluate and determine an appropriate strategy for ensuring local emergency management has the capacity to fulfill its responsibilities to the citizens of its jurisdiction and the entire state.
 - Work with the Iowa Emergency Management Association in a public education initiative to emphasize the critical role and value of local emergency management in and for every local jurisdiction in Iowa.
 - Work with stakeholder organizations to encourage and promote membership in the Iowa Mutual Aid Compact.
7. Support integrated, regional planning to address recovery and leverage multi-jurisdictional strengths for ongoing initiatives.

- The state should provide seed resources and technical assistance for comprehensive regional planning.
 - Engage public, private, and non-profit sectors in multi-jurisdictional emergency planning.
 - Strongly encourage school districts, AEAs, preschools, and institutions of higher education to develop a coordinated mitigation plan and suggest membership in the Iowa Mutual Aid Compact as a best practice.
 - Work with the Iowa Association of Regional Councils (IARC) to assess each Council of Government's (COG) capacity to support long term recovery and regional planning, seeking additional resources on behalf of the COGs to close gaps in capacity as an investment in regional planning.
 - In light of the increased focus on planning at the state, regional, and local levels, the state should consider establishing a state resource devoted to integrating program and planning functions.
8. Promote and support communications and outreach initiatives to educate and support Iowans as they recover and plan for future disasters.
- Provide information to points of entry, including schools and preschools, colleges and universities, AEAs, child care homes and centers, cities, counties, and other community organizations that see impacted families on a regular basis.
 - The state should design and implement a communication plan educating the public on the importance of vital and essential records, collections, archives, photographs, and other items.
 - The state should take the lead in developing and promoting educational messages about flood insurance and its value, including training for private insurance agents and non-participating communities.
 - The state, regional groups, local governments, and interest groups should capitalize on the use of existing technical information to transform it into public educational messages, jargon-free, and appealing to the sense of individual, family, and community need. An example of this is to use more meaningful terms for 100-year and 500-year floodplain risks. An example: the 100-year floodplain has a 1% chance and a 500-year floodplain has a .002% chance of flooding in a given year.
 - The state should take the lead and engage communities in explaining and educating Iowans about locating in or near floodplains so they can make informed decisions.
 - Conduct a broad statewide awareness campaign to provide information to the public and help remove the stigma associated with seeking mental health assistance.

- Create close relationships with local public health agencies and a local network of agencies and organizations to share information on air and water quality issues.
 - Ensure individuals understand and recognize their risks and demonstrate personal responsibility accordingly.
 - Conduct outreach using methods and venues familiar to and frequented by impacted Iowans to promote the case management services to assist them in their recovery.
 - Provide information in cooperation with local public health agencies about potential continuing health risks, including mental health issues emerging as recovery continues.
 - Conduct outreach and information dissemination efforts to inform and promote participation in assistance programs such as Jumpstart, education assistance, and other specific state initiatives.
 - Provide information to the public on a regular basis about the status and progress of recovery in the areas of housing, business and industry, and infrastructure in light of the lessons learned from the 2008 disasters.
 - Provide public education to promote citizen and commercial incorporation of energy efficiency and smart development principles.
 - Educate the public and stakeholders about practices, buildings, and community design that ensure accessibility and livability for people of all ages and abilities.
 - Provide public information and education about practices to retain water where it falls and other conservation and agriculture practices.
9. The state should move state policy forward and lead the discussion with regional and local interests on floodplain and watershed management.
- The state should take the lead in and provide incentives and resources for communities within the watershed regions of Iowa to convene in a regional approach to floodplain planning and management.
 - The state should convene federal, local, and state program leaders with responsibilities for all related programs from transportation infrastructure to recreational sites to identify and align program requirements and coordinate their impact on the floodplain, again most effectively implemented within a watershed area. Once convened, leaders should make recommendations and plan for development and implementation.
 - The state should take the lead, provide technical assistance, and support communities and regions in developing local land use policies and practices to support floodplain management and hazard mitigation.

- The state should develop and adopt a core or base-level land use policy to protect lowans from the impacts of flooding, based on current data and with involvement of local governments in the process.
- The state should develop and promote urban practices that reduce stormwater issues.
- The state should provide funding and technical support to responsible entities and agencies to ensure existing floodplain management and hazard mitigation infrastructure located in Iowa are regularly inspected and maintained.
- The state should form a multi-agency work group including representatives from regional watersheds and other key stakeholders to advise the state's initiatives in floodplain and watershed management.
- The state should seek opportunities to complete watershed studies for the primary watersheds across the state, leveraging federal funding, and providing data and information by which strategic and planning decisions can be based.

10. Sustain community identity, quality of life, and cultural heritage.

- Use Iowa's rivers and spaces as an asset to the community and state.
- Find alternative spaces for displaced cultural organizations and artists, and assist with the costs of acquiring those spaces.
- Increase the support of public art associated with construction of new and damaged buildings as well as maintenance of projects.
- Establish a greater state capacity to provide direct technical assistance and training for records management, preservation, and storage.
- Undertake a marketing initiative to show that Iowa continues to share its cultural heritage, conduct business, educate residents, and enjoy Iowa's quality of life.
- Develop a strategy for technical assistance and support of Iowa's cultural and historic institutions throughout recovery.

Suggested Strategies Related to Other Issues Discussed by the Task Forces

Infrastructure

11. The state should lead in planning for and establishing expectations statewide for infrastructure repair, rebuilding, or construction.

- The state should complete a comprehensive infrastructure plan, including transportation, to provide strategic direction for infrastructure investments.
- Provide “personnel infrastructure” to fulfill gaps in state capacity that are negatively impacting recovery at the state and local levels, e.g., DNR permitting, dam inspections, and public health surveillance.
- Develop state policy regarding incorporation of smart development principles, green building practices, energy efficiency measures, universal design, and livability appropriately into infrastructure initiatives.
- Develop state guidance for incorporating safe rooms and other mitigation measures when constructing certain types of structures.
- Support local assessment of landfill capacity and projected future requirements in light of the demand created by exceptional amounts of damage debris.

Planning for Response (No formal recommendation is needed.)

- Work with local and regional organizations to promote and support their coordinated planning initiatives.

Rebuild Iowa Office Roles and Responsibilities

12. The state should institutionalize the Rebuild Iowa Office and associated responsibilities related to disaster recovery.

- Affirm the role of the Rebuild Office to provide leadership in Iowa’s recovery from the tornadoes, storms, and floods of 2008.
- Ensure transparency in the recovery process.
- Develop strategic policy for recovery in cooperation with state agency partners.
- Coordinate state policy activities of recovery and rebuilding.
- Provide a link and clearinghouse function for information about recovery efforts.
- Provide state leadership in recovery relationships, activities, and initiatives with local governments.